

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 3855

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC
SUBJ: RSO POSITION, TEHRAN

REF: (A) STATE 048228, (B) ABIDJAN 2052

1. THIS MESSAGE IS FOR DASS FROM RSS
2. REFTEL (B) WAS A PROVISIONAL NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSAL TO REASSIGN ONE OF THE RSO POSITIONS IN TEHRAN. I SUSPECT THAT A DECISION HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE TO DISESTABLISH THE THIRD SLOT. IF SO, THEN I DO NOT CONCUR.
3. I HAVE CAREFULLY REVIEWED THE MONTHLY STATUS REPORTS FROM TEHRAN. THE JANUARY REPORT DOCUMENTS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE RSOS, WHICH APPEARS RATHER EXTENSIVE. THE REPORT IS DISTRUBING IN SEVERAL ASPECTS; THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW ANTI-AMERICAN TERRORIST GROUP; THE LARGE NUMBER OF SURVEILLANCE REPORTS; AND THE ON-GOING REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE NUMEROUS BRIEFINGS AND ADMINIS-TRATIVE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY.
4. I WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT THE EMBASSY HAS CONTRACTED WITH AN AMERICAN FOR A PERIOD OF 60 DAYS TO COMPLETELY REVISE AND UPDATE EMBASSY WARDEN SYSTEM; REVISE EMBASSY E&E PLAN; UPDATE LOCATOR CARD SYSTEM; AND TIE THAT IN WITH THE EMBASSY E&E PLAN AND WARDEN SYSTEM. IT HAS BEEN MY EXPERIENCE THAT THE

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INDIVIDUAL THAT WRITES THE PLANS IS THE ONE MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE OF THOSE PLANS AND THE MOST EFFECTIVE OFFICER AROUND DURING AN EMERGENCY. I ASSUME THE CONTRACT EMPLOYEE WOULD NOT BE AROUND.

5. IT APPEARS TO ME THAT IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, THE RSO SHOULD HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY AND ALL EMERGENCY PLANS.

6. RSO TEHRAN HAS NOT REPORTED ANY RE-CERTIFICATIONS OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES FOR MONTHS, YET THE RECENT HISTORY OF THAT POST REFLECTS THAT LOCALS HAVE BEEN APPROACHED AND RECRUITED. THE FORMER AMBASSADOR TO TEHRAN WAS QUIETLY CRITICAL OF OUR INABILITY (?) TO MAINTAIN CLOSER SURVEILLANCE AND CHECKS OF LOCALS. ADDITIONALLY, I NOTED THAT SURVEYS FOR USIS AND THE CHANCERY IN TEHRAN BECAME DUE IN NOVEMBER, 1977.

7. QUOTING FROM THE OCTOBER MSR OF TEHRAN: "TERRORISM IS A FACT OF LIFE IN IRAN. ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-FIVE INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN IRAN BY TERRORISTS DURING THE PAST SIX YEARS. AMERICANS ARE SPECIFICALLY TARGETED BY TERRORIST GROUPS."

8. WE HAVE RESPONDED TO THIS THREAT BY ASSIGNING THREE RSOS. IN SO DOING, WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A FAIRLY EFFECTIVE SYSTEM TO PROVIDE SOME PROTECTION TO EMPLOYEES GOING TO AND FROM WORK. HOWEVER, IT ENDS THERE. EMPLOYEES ARE ON THEIR OWN DURING AFTER HOURS AND ON WEEKENDS.

9. IN SUMMARY, I DO NOT SEE WHAT CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED THAT WARRANTS THE CONCLUSION THAT A THIRD RSO IS NO LONGER NEEDED. IT APPEARS TO ME TO BE JUST THE OPPOSITE.
BLANE

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